

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

Claims 9 and 10 have been canceled, without prejudice or disclaimer, in favor of newly presented Claims 14-18, which have been drafted to avoid the objection to the drawings and the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph. Moreover, the newly presented claims clearly avoid the rejection of Claims 9 and 10 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

Independent Claims 14 and 17 each set forth an apparatus for producing a friction plate having oil grooves communicating between the inner and outer peripheries of the friction plate. The apparatus is operative such that the oil grooves include a first plurality of oil grooves formed by plastic working (Claim 14) or by cutting (Claim 17) of the friction material, and a second plurality of oil grooves which have bottoms defined by a surface of a core plate and which are formed by fixation of friction material segments with predetermined gaps therebetween to the core plate.

There is no teaching or suggestion of the foregoing features of the invention in the collective teachings of the so-called admitted prior art and U.S. Patent No. 3,897,860 to Borck et al. (Borck), which together constitute the basis

of the outstanding rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a). As to Borck in particular, note that the reference fails to teach or suggest at least second grooves having bottoms defined by the surface of the core plate. Moreover, as the configuration of the friction plate produced by the claimed apparatus necessarily limits the manner of operation of the apparatus, the claimed apparatus cannot properly be said to be inherent in the prior art.

Accordingly, this application is in condition for allowance and should now be passed to issue.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge to Deposit Account No. 50-1165 any fees under 37 C.F.R. §§1.16 and 1.17 which may be required by this paper, and to credit any overpayment to that Account. If any extension of time is required in connection with the filing of this paper and has not been requested separately, then such extension is hereby requested.

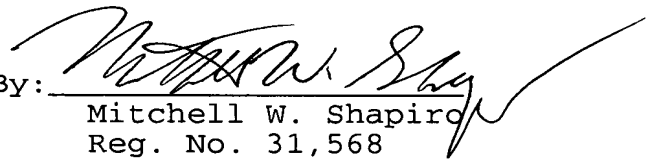
Respectfully submitted,

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**CERTIFICATE OF MAILING**

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as first class mail in an envelope addressed to the Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on the date shown below.

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